SAM AMIDON
BRIGHT SUNNY SOUTH

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1. Bright Sunny South
2. I Wish I Wish
3. Short Life
4. My Old Friend
5. He's Taken My Feet
6. Pharaoh
7. As I Roved Out
8. Shake It Off
9. Groundhog
10. Streets of Derry
11. Weeping Mary

Sam Amidon: sing, banjo, fiddle, acoustic guitar; piano on "Shake It Off"
Thomas Bartlett: piano, Hammond organ, Wurlitzer, Moog synthesizer; percussion & electric guitar on "Weeping Mary"
Shahzad Ismaily: electric & acoustic guitars, electric bass, Moog bass; drums on "I Wish I Wish"; shaker egg on "As I Roved Out"
Chris Vatalaro: drums & percussion; flute on "Pharaoh"; a taste of the Wurli on "I Wish I Wish"

Kenny Wheeler: trumpet on "I Wish I Wish" & "He's Taken My Feet"
Doug Wieselman: clarinets on "Weeping Mary"
Tyler Gibbons: electric bass on "Streets of Derry"

All songs are traditional, reworked & arranged by Sam Amidon (published by Sam Amidon), except:

"My Old Friend" (McEwan/Wiseman; Universal Music/BMG Music Pub. LTD), arranged by Sam Amidon and Thomas Bartlett

"Shake It Off" (Cox/Carey/Austin/Dupri; Songs of Universal, Inc./Rye Songs/Chrysalis Music/Naked Under My Clothes/EMI/April Music/WB Music Corp), arranged by Sam Amidon

"Weeping Mary" (McCurry/Power), arranged by Sam Amidon and Thomas Bartlett

NOTE TO THE LISTENER

What happened is I took a long walk, a 6,000 hour walk (it took 600 days aka 6,000 years – that's pretty long!) and there were little stops along the way where I gathered the objects that make up *Bright Sunny South*. It's a sculpture garden of personal relics. Each sound and lyric and melody and rhythm is a talisman with an interior meaning. (Not as freakin interior as *Live Like You Were Dying* or *The Emancipation of Mimi*, but interior nonetheless, u feel me.)

"He's Taken My Feet" is an old hymn I learned from the singing of the late Lucy Simpson. It can be found on the classic Folk-Legacy album *Sharon Mountain Harmony* from 1982. There is at least one song here stolen/borrowed/lent from Dock Boggs…. The shape-note song "Weeping Mary" can be found in print in John G. McCurry's 1855 collection *The Social Harp*, or in recorded form on the Word of Mouth Chorus LP *Rivers of Delight* (Nonesuch, 1979), with Peter Amidon and a young Mary Alice Copeland (soon to be Amidon) on tenor and soprano, respectively. The Word of Mouth Chorus being at that time the choir of Peter Schumann's Bread & Puppet Theater, who still put on their annual circus & pageant up in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont throughout the month of August.

For one hour during the recording, Kenny Wheeler came in to play trumpet. We were in London near Green Lanes. *Gnu High* is one of my favorite ECM records. Kenny isn't moving so easily these days and when he arrived we were worried that he would be unable to play…but once he got his horn up there, he was shredding. You see, I live in a faraway place called England now, which Beth is teaching me about – its many secrets and pathways.

But also have you seen *Two for the Road* (dir. Stanley Donen)? Or maybe you read *Stoner* by John Edward Williams? Thomas told me to read that one, so I did, I read it. Enjoy…

—Sam Amidon

BRIGHT SUNNY SOUTH

In the bright sunny south, in peace and content
These days of my boyhood I scarcely have spent
From the deep flowing spring, to the broad flowing stream
Ever dear to my memory, the sweeter is my dream

I lay my confinement and comfort of life
The dangers of warfare, provision and strife
I have come to come close and reply with my word
As I shoulder my musket, and belted my sword

My father looked sad as he bid me to part
My mother embraced me with anguish of heart
My beautiful sister looked pale in her woe
As she hugged me and blessed me and told me to go

Dear father, dear father, for me do not weep
I'm a lonesome man and I mean for to keep
The dangers of war, I intend for to share
And for sickness and death, I intend to prepare

Dear mother, dear mother, for me do not weep
For a mother's kind voice I always will keep
You have taught me be brave from a boy to a man
And I'm going in defense of your own native land

Dear sister, dear sister, I'm afeared of your woe
Your grief and your sorrow, they trouble me so
I must be going, for here I cannot stand
I'm going in defense of her own native land

SHORT LIFE

Short life of trouble
A few more days of woe

You knew what you promised
It's been some time ago
Promised you would marry me
Standing on the ballroom floor

Short life of trouble
A few more days of woe

I see the train a'coming
Coming by the station now
I'd rather be dead or in my grave
Than to see my darling go

Short life of trouble
A few more days of woe

HE'S TAKEN MY FEET

He's taken my feet from the mire and the clay
And he's placed them on the rock of ages

I'll praise him while he gives me breath
Hope to praise him after death
And I will praise him as I die
Shout salvation as I fly

AS I ROVED OUT

As I roved out, on a cold winter's night
Drinking of sweet wine
I spied that girl, that sweet little girl
Who broke this heart of mine

Her cheeks are like some red roses
That bloom in the month of June
Her voice is like some instrument
That's always on some tune

I wish to the Lord that I'd never been born
Or died when I was young
I never would have carried such a broken heart
Oh the young girl's flattering tongue

Oh the green green grass that's trampled underfoot
Will rise and bloom again
But love, it is a killing thing
Did you ever feel such pain?

Produced by Sam Amidon, Jerry Boys, and Thomas Bartlett

Engineered and Mixed by Jerry Boys
Recorded at Snap Recording Studios and Livingston Studios, London
"Weeping Mary" Engineered by Patrick Dillett at No Fat Studios, New York, NY
Violin and Bass on "Streets of Derry" Recorded by Tyler Gibbons at Red Heart Studios, Marlboro, VT
Assistant Engineers: Ben Mclusky at Snap; Sonny at Livingston

Design by John Gall
Photography by Terry Magson

Executive Producer: David Bither

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